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Selected Speeches and News Releases

July 5 - July 12, 1990

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U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

GROWING TREES IN LAB DISH COULD MAKE CANCER DRUG MORE AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON—A cancer-fighting drug could come from tree cells growing in a laboratory—instead of from the bark of 2,000 to 4,000 Pacific yew trees now needed to make one kilogram of the drug.

U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists are filing a patent for the technique to produce the drug, taxol, in tissue culture.

“What we are doing is growing just the drug-producing cells instead of growing the whole tree,” said plant physiologist Donna M. Gibson of USDA’s Agricultural Research Service, who heads the Microbial/Plant Technology Research Laboratory in New Orleans. The cells will produce usable amounts of taxol. Unfortunately, the cells grow very slowly. But the trees grow even slower.”

Gibson said ARS is seeking a company with which to sign a research and licensing agreement to further develop the technique.

“We have the method for growing the taxol-producing cells, but now we need someone interested in working on scaling the method up to a commercial level,” she said.

The research team that isolated the drug-producing cells and found a way to grow them in the laboratory was headed by former ARS plant geneticist Alice A. Christen.

Taxol, which has already proved successful in clinical trials, fights cancer by inhibiting the division of tumor cells.

Recently, the National Cancer Institute held a meeting to discuss taxol’s possibilities as a cancer treatment and ways to produce enough for future research needs and for general treatment if the federal Food and Drug Administration approves the drug.

Taxol’s success has put a heavy burden on the Pacific yew, an evergreen tree native to the Pacific Northwest, from whose bark the drug must currently be made.

Using standard technology, it takes up to 20,000 pounds of bark—two to four thousand trees—to produce one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of the drug. Harvesting the bark means sacrificing the trees, which are in short supply and take nearly 50 years to reach practical size.

Taxol is too complicated a chemical compound to synthesize.

Very little is known about cultivating the Pacific yew. It grows in older, mature forests of the Pacific Northwest. Changes in the habitat after timber harvesting could affect the tree's ability to regrow at all in an area, Gibson said.

Kim Kaplan (301) 344-3932

Issued: July 5, 1990

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USDA TO TEST GRAIN FOR DIATOMACEOUS EARTH

WASHINGTON, July 5—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service today announced the availability of a new testing service for determining the presence of diatomaceous earth in grain. Diatomaceous earth is a naturally occurring substance that is approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for controlling insects and is sometimes added to grain shipments for that purpose.

"The new testing service provides the grain industry an opportunity to have grain examined for the presence of diatomaceous earth," said FGIS Administrator John C. Foltz. "Even though FGIS can neither approve nor disapprove the use of specific insecticides, we do support the development and use of natural insecticides."

Foltz said that past FGIS procedures required an inspector to designate grain containing an unknown substance as U.S. Sample grade, the lowest quality designation. The new test service offers the grain industry the option of determining if the unknown substance is diatomaceous earth. If the substance is diatomaceous earth, the grain will not be graded U.S. Sample grade. However, a statement indicating this result will be reported on the inspection certificate.

The tests will be performed at FGIS' Commodity Testing Laboratory in Beltsville, Md. Other laboratories may be approved to perform this test in the future.

Applicants who desire to have their grain tested for diatomaceous earth should contact their local FGIS field office or official inspection agency office for details. Upon request, the field office or agency will draw a

sample of grain and submit it the Commodity Testing Laboratory (or other approved laboratory) for testing.

Dana Blatt (202) 382-0378

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SCHULER GRAIN COMPANY CONVICTED, FINED \$250,000 FOR ADULTERATING GRAIN

WASHINGTON, July 5—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service announced today that two owners of the Schuler Grain Company of Breckenridge, Minn., have been convicted and sentenced in federal court for selling adulterated wheat.

Brothers George M. Schuler and Robert V. Schuler each were placed on three years probation and fined \$250,000 on June 27 by Judge David S. Doty of the U.S. District Court of Minnesota.

The Schuler brothers had pleaded guilty to three counts of adding urea to wheat shipments to increase the protein content. The price of wheat is determined in large part by its protein content. Grain merchandisers test for protein by measuring the nitrogen present in the wheat. The Schulers were charged with artificially increasing the nitrogen content by adding urea to the wheat.

FGIS Administrator John C. Foltz said that in September 1985 FGIS reported to the Food and Drug Administration that 25 hopper cars and three barges of wheat shipped from the Schuler Grain Company had tested positive for urea.

In documents filed with the court, FDA estimated that for several years, beginning in the early 1980s, the defendants purchased tons of urea from chemical companies which was then mixed with wheat shipments. Foltz said the FDA estimated that these high-volume purchases of urea allowed the Schulers to treat over two million bushels of wheat, resulting in exceedingly high profit margins. "Adding urea to wheat is a blatant effort to make a fast buck by deceiving buyers," Foltz said.

Schuler Grain Company stores and markets grain for farmers in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. The Schuler brothers have been in the grain business for more than four decades.

Paul Marsden (202) 475-3428

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PRIVATE EXPORTERS REPORT SALES ACTIVITY FOR MEXICO

WASHINGTON, July 5—Private exporters today reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 126,000 metric tons of corn for delivery to Mexico during the 1989-90 marketing year.

The marketing year for corn began Sept. 1.

USDA issues both daily and weekly export sales reports to the public. Exporters are required to report to USDA export sales of 100,000 metric tons or more of one commodity, made in one day, to one destination by 3:00 PM eastern time on the next business day following the sale. Export sales of less than these quantities must be reported to USDA on a weekly basis.

Thomas B. McDonald (202) 447-3273

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USDA SEEKS COMMENT ON PROPOSAL TO REVISE FRESH POTATO STANDARDS

WASHINGTON, July 6—The U.S. Department of Agriculture seeks comment on a proposal to revise the U.S. standards for grades of potatoes for the first time since 1972.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the Idaho Grower-Shippers Association, proponent of the revisions, believes they would establish more specific criteria for scoring internal defects of potatoes and would make potato grading even more exact than it is now.

The proponent suggests, for example, that using an area gauge to determine the amount of hollowness and internal discoloration would make the grading of potatoes more objective, Haley said. Currently, the extent of hollowness is estimated, not measured precisely.

Also proposed is a consideration of the ratio of internal defect to the size of a potato, when grading those defects. At issue is the chance that a large potato with a quarter-inch hollow interior, for example, might be equal in grade to a small potato with the same sized hollow, Haley said.

"It's interesting that potato grades—instituted in 1917—can still evolve," Haley said. Today's USDA grading standards covering hundreds of products originated with the U.S. Army's request for USDA in World

War I to grade potatoes so that soldiers working in army kitchens would be able to have a constant supply of adequately sized, undamaged potatoes, he said.

AMS works with industry representatives to establish or revise U.S. standards for many agricultural products. The standards are used in a fee-based grading service that industries request.

Notice of the request for comment on the proposed revisions of the potato standards will be published in the July 9 Federal Register. Written comments, postmarked or courier-dated no later than Sept. 7, may be sent to the Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, P.O. Box 96456, Rm. 2056-S, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Copies of the Federal Register announcement are available from that address; telephone (202) 447-2185.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA TO STUDY ALTERNATIVES TO FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDER BASE PRICE

WASHINGTON, July 6—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is undertaking an extensive review of alternatives to the current base price used in setting minimum prices in all federal milk marketing orders.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said the orders currently use a base price known as the Minnesota- Wisconsin (M-W) price, which is the average of prices paid to farmers in the two-state area for manufacturing grade (Grade B) milk, that is, milk eligible for use only in manufactured milk products.

In effect since the early 1960's, the M-W base price has been widely accepted in the dairy industry as a good measure of changes in the supply and demand for milk nationally, Haley said. A continuing decline in Grade B milk production, in part the result of more stringent sanitary requirements on dairy farms, is gradually rendering the M-W manufacturing milk price unusable for formulating milk prices, he said.

"Eventually, there will not be enough of that kind of milk sold to make a reliable base price," Haley said. USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, which compiles the M-W price, questions whether it will be able to provide that price after mid-1992, he said.

Aware of the limits of the M-W pricing formula, segments of the dairy industry have requested USDA to develop and test alternatives. The industry has forwarded some proposals for the crowded agenda of the national hearing on all federal milk orders, tentatively set for September, but USDA plans a later, separate hearing on the base price, Haley said. "To be useful, pricing alternatives should be tested for at least a year in the real world and marketplace of seasonal swings in production and consumption," Haley said.

USDA is proceeding with a study of alternatives to the M-W price, and results of the study will be on the agenda of the projected hearing on this issue. USDA invites specific proposals to consider in its study. Proposals should be mailed by July 25 to the Director, Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

Federal animal welfare legislation was first passed in 1966 and covered animal dealers who raised dogs and cats for research and laboratories conducting research on these mammals. In 1970, coverage was broadened to include most other warmblooded animals used in research, exhibited or sold in the wholesale pet trade. A 1976 amendment extended coverage to include the transportation of live animals.

Sibyl K. Bowie (301) 436-7255

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USDA DECIDES TWO ANIMAL WELFARE ACT COMPLIANCE CASES

WASHINGTON, July 9—The U.S. Department of Agriculture settled two cases during May to enforce the humane care and treatment of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act.

James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said the cases resulted from earlier charges. Details are:

—Rudolph Vrana and Helena Vrana, currently residing in Woodward, Okla., and formerly of Roaring Gap, N.C., and Millville, N.J., were ordered by an administrative law judge to jointly pay a \$6,000 civil penalty and refrain from engaging in any business capacity that requires a license under the Animal Welfare Act for a period of 10 years. Also, the Vranas were ordered to cease and desist from future violations of the act and, in particular, from operating without a federal animal dealer's

license. USDA charged that, although the Vranas voluntarily surrendered their license on Feb. 16, 1988, they continued to purchase and sell dogs wholesale. Other alleged violations were cited during a compliance inspection of their facility on Sept. 19, 1988. The Vranas were charged with keeping dogs in housing that was not structurally sound and in good repair, failing to keep housing clean and sanitized, failing to provide for removal and disposal of animal waste, failing to provide shelter from inclement weather for animals kept outdoors, failing to establish an adequate pest control program and failing to establish a veterinary care program as required.

—Edward Fabry, doing business as Fab Labs in New City, N.Y., consented to the issuance of a cease-and-desist order and to pay a \$2,000 civil penalty without admitting or denying USDA allegations that he failed to comply with housing and other standards of the Animal Welfare Act. During a period between Jan. 2 and Sept. 17, 1986, USDA charged that Fabry failed to keep his cats in housing facilities that were clean, adequately ventilated, structurally sound, substantially impervious to moisture and maintained in good repair. Also, he was charged with failing to establish an adequate veterinary care program, employ enough staff to maintain an appropriate level of husbandry practices and maintain a system of records for the disposition of his cats.

Standards for the care and treatment of certain animals have been required by the Animal Welfare Act since 1966. Animals protected by the law must be provided adequate housing, handling, sanitation, food, water, transportation, veterinary care and protection against extremes of weather and temperature. The law covers animals that are sold as pets at the wholesale level or are used for biomedical research or for exhibition purposes.

USDA enforces the act primarily through administrative prosecutions. Many of these cases are resolved through the consent decision provisions of the regulations. Under these provisions, USDA and the respondent named in the complaint agree to a stipulated order and penalties. If the case is not settled, there is a hearing before an administrative law judge who issues a decision. Any party may appeal the administrative law judge's decision to the USDA's judicial officer. The respondent may appeal an adverse decision by the judicial officer to the U. S. Court of Appeals. Failure to respond to the charges in the complaint results in the issuance of a default order assessing penalties.

Dealers, breeders, brokers, transportation companies, exhibitors and research facilities must be licensed or registered. USDA personnel make periodic, unannounced inspections to help assure compliance. Action is taken against violators after efforts to secure compliance are unsuccessful, Glosser said.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-7799

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USDA SETTLES 11 ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH COMPLIANCE CASES

WASHINGTON, July 9—The U.S. Department of Agriculture settled 11 cases during May to enforce federal animal and plant health laws and regulations.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is responsible for a variety of programs to prevent, control or eradicate pests and diseases of plants and animals. In enforcing the regulations to accomplish this mission, legal action is generally taken against violators only after repeated efforts to secure compliance are unsuccessful, according to James W. Glosser, administrator of APHIS.

The latest monthly figures show that individuals and businesses who violated the regulations were fined a total of \$13,375 and one veterinarian had his federal accreditation suspended. Also, port inspectors collected \$78,756 in civil penalties from 2,363 international travelers caught smuggling potentially hazardous agricultural products into the country and \$5,200 from 30 businesses or shipping companies that mishandled or improperly disposed of regulated garbage.

In addition, 45 other charges were filed during May against persons or businesses accused of violating agency regulations. One involved baggage inspection; one involved importing a bird from Mexico; one involved exporting bulls without the required certificate; three involved veterinary accreditation; six involved the mishandling of foreign-origin garbage; eight involved the importation of prohibited fruit, vegetables or soil; 12 involved the illegal interstate movement of cattle and 13 involved horse soring incidents.

USDA enforces its regulations primarily through administrative charges, many of which are resolved through consent orders, levying specified penalties. Alternatively, an administrative law judge hears the

case and renders a decision. Either USDA or the respondent may appeal the administrative law judge's decision to the USDA's judicial officer. Only the respondent may appeal an adverse decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals. The following actions were settled in May:

IMPORT/EXPORT REGULATIONS—Import restrictions cover most farm animals and many plant materials and are aimed at preventing the introduction of serious foreign animal or plant diseases and pests that do not exist in this country. USDA certifies export shipments to assure that only healthy animals and plant materials reach foreign markets.

—Demetrio Vasquez of Long Beach, Calif., was assessed a \$500 civil penalty by an administrative law judge after he failed to answer a formal complaint charging that he violated federal fruit import regulations. Vasquez has 30 days from service of the decision to appeal it to the judicial officer. The alleged violation occurred on Nov. 2, 1986, when Vasquez imported several limes into the United States from Mexico without an accompanying permit and some apples, which are prohibited entry.

GARBAGE HANDLING REGULATIONS—To prevent the spread of dangerous animal and plant diseases or pests, all food waste or refuse accumulated on board international aircraft or ocean vessels must be stored in tight, leak-proof, covered receptacles until it can be properly disposed of at a facility approved by USDA.

—Dispatch Services, Inc., of Miami, Fla., agreed to pay a \$2,000 civil penalty to settle USDA charges that it failed to comply with federal requirements for handling foreign-origin garbage. USDA alleged that on three occasions between Oct. 31, 1988, and Jan. 18, 1989, the company unloaded garbage from commercial flights arriving in the United States from Jamaica, Venezuela and Brazil without securing the waste in tight, leak-proof covered receptacles. Allegedly, the company also failed to dispose of the garbage at an approved facility for incineration, sterilization or grinding as required.

—United Airlines Flight Kitchen, with a business address at Honolulu International Airport in Honolulu, Hawaii, was assessed a \$375 civil penalty by an administrative law judge to resolve USDA charges that it violated federal regulations for handling foreign-origin garbage. USDA alleged that on June 16, 1989, the company unloaded garbage from a commercial flight arriving at Honolulu International Airport without securing the waste in tight, leak-proof covered receptacles and allegedly

failed to transfer it to an approved disposal facility for incineration or grinding under the direction of a USDA inspector as required.

INTERSTATE MOVEMENT OF LIVESTOCK—Certain livestock moving across state lines must be identified and accompanied by health certificates and permits, depending on the species, age, sex, health status and origin of the animals. A number of livestock diseases, such as brucellosis and tuberculosis, are being eradicated under cooperative state-federal programs; however, these diseases could spread rapidly if dealers and producers fail to follow shipping rules.

—Wayne May, owner of Brownwood Cattle Auction in Brownwood, Texas, has agreed to pay a \$250 civil penalty without admitting or denying USDA charges that he violated federal cattle shipping regulations. USDA alleged that on March 25, 1987, May moved at least 10 brucellosis exposed cattle interstate from Brownwood, Texas, to Ada, Okla., without an accompanying permit to indicate the true destination of the cattle being shipped without an accompanying permit. Other alleged violations occurred on Aug. 5, Aug. 12 and Sept. 3, 1986, when Reed moved at least 287 cows from Oklahoma to Lubbock, Texas, without an owner's statement or other documents containing prescribed information as required. Further, during a period from May 13 through May 27, 1988, Reed allegedly moved 3 cows from Springdale, Ark., to Tulsa, Okla., without the required certificate and permit for entry.

—Charles J. Puff and High Adventure Ranch, Inc., of Maryland Heights, Mo., have agreed to pay a \$250 civil penalty without admitting or denying USDA allegations that they violated federal regulations for moving animals interstate. USDA alleged that on March 19, 1988, Puff and High Adventure violated the regulations when they moved approximately 39 swine from Cook Station, Mo., to Rozel, Kans., with an accompanying certificate that did not contain the prescribed information as required.

—Ricky Bobo of Cumming, Ga., was assessed a \$2,000 civil penalty by an administrative law judge after he failed to answer a formal complaint, within the allotted time, charging that he violated federal requirements for the interstate movement of cattle. USDA alleged that on April 16, 1987, Bobo moved at least 23 cattle interstate from Laurens, S.C., to Siloam Springs, Ark., without a certificate, owner's statement or other acceptable documents containing prescribed information on the animals' destination and health status.

—Tracy G. Harvey of Blossom, Texas, was assessed a \$1,000 civil penalty by an administrative law judge after he failed to answer a formal complaint charging that he failed to comply with federal requirements for moving livestock interstate. USDA charged that on Nov. 9, 1988, Harvey moved a test-eligible bull interstate from Coushatta, La., to Hugo, Okla., without an accompanying certificate and the required permit for entry.

—Dairy Farm Leasing Co., of Minneapolis, Minn., agreed to pay a \$2,000 civil penalty without admitting or denying USDA allegations that the company failed to comply with federal cattle shipping regulations. USDA alleged that on five occasions between March 27 and Dec. 22, 1984, Dairy Farm shipped approximately 102 cattle interstate from various locations in Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota to Wisconsin without an accompanying certificate.

HORSE PROTECTION ACT—The Horse Protection Act prohibits soring—the use of cruel methods, devices or irritants to cause pain in a horse's legs to make a more pronounced gait in the show ring.

—Donald N. Sherman, a horse owner in Newcastle, Calif., was disqualified for one year and fined \$500 without admitting or denying USDA charges that he entered his horse, "Pride's Skippy," in competition while it was sore. The alleged violation occurred on May 11, 1986, at the Tennessee Walking Horse Exhibitors Association of Oregon Annual Spring Show in Eugene, Ore. Terms of the disqualification require Sherman to refrain from showing or exhibiting any horse and from judging, managing or otherwise participating in any horse show or sale until June 1, 1991.

VETERINARY ACCREDITATION—USDA accredits practicing veterinarians to perform official services for USDA. To become accredited, veterinarians must pass a special examination and adhere to a strict code of ethics, regulations and procedures. Suspension or revocation of accreditation does not affect a veterinarian's state license to practice veterinary medicine.

—Eugene M. Ennenbach of Marceline, Mo., agreed to have his federal accreditation suspended for 75 days from June 1 through Aug. 14. USDA charged that Ennenbach failed to issue health certificates in accordance with prescribed federal standards; that on Dec. 5 and again on Jan. 19, 1985, he signed certificates covering the unrestricted interstate movement of 200 mixed heifers from New Cambria, Mo., to Hydro, Okla., and 25 cows from New Cambria, Mo., to Springdale, Ark., respectively without

fully and accurately completing the certificates. Specifically, Ennenbach failed to indicate on the certificate the name and address of the consignor and the point of origin of the shipment.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-6464

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FLORIDA COTTON GROWERS TO VOTE ON BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, July 9—A referendum to be held July 13-20 will allow cotton growers in Florida to vote on proposed assessment increases to continue boll weevil eradication activities, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“The growers pay 70 percent of the costs of this program, and it is appropriate for them to decide if the benefit of eradicating this pest is worth the price,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

A positive vote for the referendum would raise growers’ program costs by \$10 an acre for the next four years. Currently, the assessment stands at \$25 per acre this year and \$10 per acre for the next three years.

The additional revenue is needed, according to Glosser, because of unexpected high pest pressure. “Unusually mild winters killed far fewer boll weevils than anticipated; and to maintain a viable program, more control activity was required than allowed for in the budget,” said Glosser.

Ballots will be mailed to growers on July 13 and must be returned postmarked no later than July 20. Under Florida law, at least 50 percent of the eligible growers must vote and at least two-thirds must approve the referendum for it to pass. Ballots will also be available at the county offices of USDA’s Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service in all areas of the state where cotton is commercially produced.

The Florida Cooperative Extension Service is holding four educational meetings, according to Richard Clark of the Florida Department of Agriculture. Federal and state program officials will be at the meetings to explain the referendum and answer questions.

The meeting times and locations are as follows: July 10, 7:30 a.m., at the Ruritan Club, Walnut Hill, Escambia County; July 10, 7:30 p.m., at the Jay Civic Center, Jay Santa Rosa County; July 11, 8 a.m., at the

Jackson County Agricultural Center, Marianna, Jackson County; and July 11, 1 p.m., at the Calhoun County Extension Office, Blountstown, Calhoun County.

The southeast boll weevil eradication program is also operating in Georgia and southeast Alabama, where cotton growers have already voted on and approved the referendum.

Anita K. Brown (301) 436-5931

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FGIS TO HOST REVIEW OF SOYBEAN OIL AND PROTEIN TESTING PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, July 9—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service will sponsor a public meeting on July 17 in Kansas City, Mo., to discuss the FGIS soybean oil and protein testing program.

The meeting will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Airport Hilton Plaza Inn, 8801 N.W. 112th Street.

According to FGIS Administrator John C. Foltz, the meeting will provide the industry and other interested parties an opportunity to review data which has been collected since Sept. 4, 1989, when FGIS began offering soybean oil and protein testing as official criteria in the national inspection system. The meeting will focus on the comparison of near-infrared spectroscopy instrumentation and standard reference method measurements.

For technical information contact Paul D. Marsden, FGIS Resources Management Staff, (202) 475-3428.

Dana Blatt (202) 382-0378

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USDA SETS HEARING ON VALUING BUTTERFAT IN FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDERS

WASHINGTON, July 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced a public hearing to consider proposed changes in the formula for determining the value of butterfat in the pricing of milk in all federal milk marketing orders.

The hearing will begin at 8 a.m., July 31, at the Ramada Hotel-Old Town, 901 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria, Va., 22314; telephone (703) 683-6000.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said major dairy cooperatives and milk processing trade associations requested the hearing because they think the current formula for valuing butterfat in the marketing orders' milk pricing overstates the worth of butterfat in the marketplace.

According to the proponents, milk wholesalers, or "handlers," under these federal milk orders lose money when they have to pay farmers one price for high-butterfat cream and then sell it in surplus for less to butter plants outside the orders.

Currently, butterfat in milk is given a weighted value according to a "butterfat differential" from a base of 3.5 percent. Milk having more than that percentage of butterfat gets a higher price, and milk having less than that percentage gets a lower price, Haley said. The differentials are gauged in increments or decrements of one-tenth of one percent, he said.

The proponents would alter the value of butterfat in the current formula, which, they claim, would help avoid losses in their marketing of cream, Haley said.

Authorized by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, federal milk marketing orders, which cover the major population centers in the continental United States except California, provide producers and consumers with the security of steady supplies of fairly priced milk.

Details of the proposals and notice of the hearing will be published in the July 11 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from any federal milk marketing order office, or AMS, USDA, Dairy Division, Order Formulation Branch, Rm. 2968, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 447-6273.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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USDA EXPANDS EMERGENCY FEED PROGRAM PROVISIONS FOR FLOOD DISASTER AREAS

WASHINGTON, July 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has expanded provisions of the Emergency Feed Program (EFP) now in effect in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma, to help producers recover from losses due to recent flooding, Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, announced today.

EFP is a cost-sharing program that pays eligible livestock owners a portion of the cost of feed purchased to replace that which is normally produced on the farm and which is also purchased in larger quantities because of an emergency.

“When EFP first became available in these states for 1990 crop losses, USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service county offices were instructed to compute grazing loss beginning on the date the county was approved for EFP and ending at the end of the 60-day feeding period,” Bjerke said. “County approvals varied from May 16 to May 24.”

“The procedure is being changed to allow grazing loss to be computed from the date that flooding began to the end of the approved period,” said Bjerke. “This will give producers an expanded basis upon which their eligibility for EFP will be determined.”

Bjerke said county ASCS offices will recompute the grazing loss for producers and notify them of any change in the amount of their EFP assistance.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

USDA EXTENDS DATE FOR COMMENTS ON FARM ANIMALS IN NONAGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

WASHINGTON, July 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending through Sept. 10 the comment period on its recent advance notice of proposed rulemaking to establish standards for horses and other farm animals used for nonagricultural research or nonagricultural exhibition. The previous deadline for responding to the advance notice was July 12.

“We are extending the comment period due to requests from agricultural associations, research facilities and the general public that they be allotted more time to examine current practices and to formulate constructive comments,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, which administers the Animal Welfare Act.

The Animal Welfare Act authorizes the secretary of agriculture to regulate the humane handling, care and treatment of certain warmblooded animals that are sold as pets or are used for biomedical research and exhibition purposes.

Glosser said that under the new proposal standards would be designed especially for the humane care of horses used for biomedical or other nonagricultural research, and for the humane care of other farm animals used for biomedical or other nonagricultural research, or for nonagricultural exhibition.

Glosser said that until standards are designed specifically for farm animals in these situations, USDA intends to regulate them in accordance with existing general regulations for warmblooded animals.

The announcement of this extension will be in the July 12 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Sept. 10. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 90-006 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Questa Glenn (301) 436-7799

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USDA ADOPTS PCFIA TEST FOR ITS SWINE BRUCELLOSIS PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, July 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced adoption of the particle concentration fluorescence immunoassay (PCFIA) test as an official test for brucellosis in swine.

A negative test result for brucellosis is required before some interstate movements of swine are permitted under federal regulations. Official tests

also are used to determine eligibility for indemnity payments for swine destroyed because they are infected with brucellosis.

The PCFIA test is faster, more sensitive and more specific than other laboratory tests used for brucellosis. The automated test procedure can process nearly 1,000 samples in less than two hours. Serum samples are placed in wells on a testing plate and run through an instrument that adds reagents and performs other procedures automatically. The test uses fluorescence to "read" the samples and then records and tabulates the resulting data.

In testing for brucellosis, both "presumptive" and "diagnostic" tests are used. Presumptive tests screen swine for brucellosis, but they may come out positive for other reasons also. Swine that react positively to presumptive tests must, therefore, be tested with a diagnostic test, which definitively distinguishes infected from noninfected animals.

The PCFIA test was recognized last year as official for brucellosis in cattle and bison. Its reliability with swine was verified by extensive field tests in four states. The procedure proved to be sensitive and highly specific. The test also is highly reproducible, meaning that test results from the same serum sample are consistent from one laboratory to the next. PCFIA does not have to be supplemented by other presumptive or diagnostic tests.

Brucellosis is an infectious bacterial disease that causes abortion or weak offspring in swine. USDA has taken the lead in a cooperative program to eradicate brucellosis in swine as well as cattle and bison. The final rule will be published in the July 12 Federal Register and will take effect Aug. 13.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, July 10—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture John B. Campbell today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.36 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.48 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.41 cents per pound;

—broken kernels, 4.18 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

—long grain, \$5.25 per hundredweight;

—medium grain, \$4.82 per hundredweight;

—short grain, \$4.79 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made July 17 at 3 p.m. EDT, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

#

SWEETER ONIONS HAVE MORE APPEAL TO BEES

WASHINGTON—With help from onion breeders, picky southwestern honeybees might stop holding seed production down and onion prices up, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist says.

“We’ve discovered that nectar from Texas, Arizona and California onion plants contains too much potassium and not enough sugar to suit honeybees, so they don’t pollinate the crop,” said entomologist James R. Hagler of the Agricultural Research Service in Tucson, Ariz.

“If geneticists bred onions with more appealing nectar, it could translate to more seed for growers and less seasonal swings in onion prices at the grocery store,” said Hagler at the Carl Hayden Bee Research Center.

Bees do a fine job with the Pacific Northwest’s onion seed, grown in summer. But Hagler said poor pollination of the southwest’s winter and spring crop cut yield as much as 80 percent on a field.

In tests in Arizona, “when we moved hives into onion fields, the bees flew out, straight up into the air, about 10 feet above the crop, and flew to blooming mesquite shrubs up to 200 yards distant, rather than gather the onion nectar or pollen,” said Hagler in the latest issue of the agency’s magazine, *Agricultural Research*.

A positive clue for breeders, said Hagler, is the considerable variability he found in nectar of six commercial varieties. “Wild onions could be another genetic pool, since bees prefer nectar from those types,” he said.

Dennis Senft (415) 559-6068

Issued: July 10, 1990

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SEDGEFIELD CHICKEN SALAD RECALLED FROM FIVE SOUTHEASTERN STATES

WASHINGTON, July 10—Made Rite Foods Inc., a Greensboro, N.C., food processing firm, is voluntarily recalling approximately 3,600 pounds of its “Sedgefield Chunky Chicken Salad” from five Southeastern states because the product may be contaminated with the bacterium *Listeria monocytogenes*.

The chicken salad was distributed to retail grocery markets in Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

The salad is sold in 7-oz. and 12-oz. plastic tubs. The establishment number “P-7408” appears inside the USDA inspection seal on the label. All chicken salad stamped “sell by AUG-02-90” on the bottom of the container is being recalled.

“Although no illnesses have been reported, we urge consumers to return the suspect chicken salad to the place of purchase,” said Dr. Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service. None of the company’s other products are involved in the recall.

The problem was discovered through USDA’s routine monitoring program for *Listeria monocytogenes*.

Consumption of food contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* can cause listeriosis, a rare but potentially serious disease. In general, healthy people are believed to be at little risk from listeriosis; most vulnerable are those with weakened immune systems—infants, the elderly, and the chronically ill. Listeriosis in pregnant women can cause miscarriage.

Symptoms of listeriosis in adults include the sudden onset of flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, headache, backache, and sometimes abdominal pain and diarrhea. Symptoms in newborns include respiratory distress, refusal to drink, and vomiting.

Consumers with questions about the recall may phone the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. The hotline can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern time) Monday through Friday. At other times a recording with information about the recall will be provided. Callers in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area should call 447-3333. Both phone numbers provide access to a telecommunications device for the deaf.

FSIS inspects all meat and poultry sold in interstate commerce to ensure that it is safe, wholesome and accurately labeled.

Jim Greene (202) 382-0314

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USDA EXTENDS IMPORTED FIRE ANT QUARANTINE

WASHINGTON, July 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending its quarantine on imported fire ants, affecting all or part of 11 southern states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

States in which the quarantine is being expanded to keep up with the natural spread of imported fire ants are: Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. Other quarantined jurisdictions, in which the area under quarantine remains as before, are Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Puerto Rico.

“Under the quarantine, restrictions are imposed on the interstate movement of certain goods and equipment to prevent the artificial spread of imported fire ants into noninfested areas,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “For example, nursery stock is treated before being shipped from infested areas to be sure it isn’t harboring the ants.”

The imported fire ant (*Solenopsis* species) interferes with farming operations by building huge mounds. It can cause damage to certain crops, and its stings cause discomfort to livestock, pets and people, not only on farms, but also in suburbs and cities of infested states.

Regulations affirming the new quarantine boundaries are scheduled for publication in the July 12 Federal Register when the interim rule becomes effective. The public may comment on the action before the interim rule becomes final.

Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Sept. 10. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket no. 90-101 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 866, Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected at USDA, Rm. 1141-S., 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

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USDA PROTECTS NINE NEW PLANT VARIETIES

WASHINGTON, July 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued certificates of protection to developers of nine new varieties of seed-reproduced plants, including alfalfa, garden bean, creeping bentgrass, corn, oat, perennial ryegrass and wheat.

Kenneth H. Evans, of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said developers of the new varieties will have the exclusive right to reproduce, sell, import, and export their products in the United States for 18 years. Certificates of protection are granted after a review of the breeders' records and claims that each new variety is novel, uniform and stable.

The following varieties have been issued certificates of protection:

- the WL 317 variety of alfalfa, developed by W-L Research Inc., Evansville, Wis.;

- the Goldkist variety of garden bean, developed by the Rogers Brothers Seed Co., Boise, Idaho;

- the SR 1020 variety of creeping bentgrass, developed by Seed Research of Oregon Inc., Corvallis, Ore.;

- the IBC2 variety of corn, developed by DeKalb-Pfizer Genetics, DeKalb, Ill.;

- the Starter variety of oat, developed by the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, St. Paul, Minn.;

- the Yatsyn 1 variety of perennial ryegrass, developed by New Zealand Agriseeds Ltd., Christchurch, New Zealand;

- the Basin variety of wheat, developed by Columbia Basin Seeds, Moses Lake, Wash.; and

- the 2158 and 2163 varieties of wheat, developed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., Johnston, Iowa.

The certificate of protection for the Starter oat variety, the Yatsyn 1 perennial ryegrass variety, and the Basin wheat variety are being issued to be sold by variety name only as a class of certified seed, and to conform to the number of generations specified by the owner.

The plant variety protection program is administered by AMS and provides marketing protection to developers of new and distinctive seed-reproduced plants ranging from farm crops to flowers.

Carolyn Coutts (202) 447-8998

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GRAY NAMED ACTING CHIEF OF SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

WASHINGTON, July 11—Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment James R. Moseley announced today the appointment of Roy M. “Mack” Gray to the position of acting chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Soil Conservation Service.

Gray replaces Wilson Scaling who has been the chief since 1985. Gray previously served as assistant to the SCS chief for strategic planning and budget analysis.

“Mack has played an integral part in developing SCS into one of USDA’s most highly respected and effective agencies. He is well equipped to provide leadership during this transition period,” Moseley said. “Wilson has been an excellent leader of this agency over the past five years when SCS was given an unprecedented workload as a result of the 1985 Farm Bill.”

Gray, 55, has been an employee of SCS for 34 years, starting his career as a soil conservationist in Levelland, Texas, in 1958. He has also served as a district conservationist, SCS program analyst and director of the economics division for SCS prior to being named assistant to the SCS chief for strategic planning and budget analysis in 1985.

Gray received his B.S. and Ph.D. from Texas A&M University. He is a native of Texas and resides in Virginia.

Jane Ade Stevens (202) 447-7173

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USDA TO ESTABLISH SHELLLED PISTACHIO NUT STANDARDS

WASHINGTON, July 12—The U.S. Department of Agriculture will establish U.S. standards for grades of shelled pistachio nuts, effective Aug. 13.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, said the standards would be used to grade the expanding volume of U.S.-grown pistachio nutmeats being sold domestically and exported.

In 1974, U.S. pistachios accounted for less than four percent of world production. By 1982, they accounted for 32 percent, and may account for still more of global production this year, Haley said.

Shelled standards parallel those for the unshelled nuts, Haley said.

Unshelled pistachio standards were established in 1986 at the request of the pistachio industry. USDA grades the unshelled nuts on a fee-for-service basis, and will grade the shelled nuts similarly.

The shelled pistachio nuts standards will include three grades: U.S. Fancy, U.S. No. 1, and U.S. No. 2, with criteria including size, wholeness of kernel, damage to the kernel and presence of foreign material. Like grades for other agricultural commodities, these grades will provide traders and consumers with a common language for describing quality, Haley said.

AMS establishes grade standards and provides official grading on a fee-for-service basis for hundreds of agricultural commodities. Use of the service is voluntary on the part of industry.

Details of the new standards will appear as a final rule in the July 13 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from the Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2056-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, telephone (202) 447-2185.

Clarence Steinberg (202) 447-6179

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**THIS WEEK'S HONEY-LOAN REPAYMENT LEVELS
UNCHANGED**

WASHINGTON, July 12—Producers may repay their 1989 honey price-support loans at the following levels, according to Keith D. Bjerke, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation:

Weekly Honey-loan Repayment Levels, color and class, cents per pound, 1989 crop Table

White	40.0
Extra-light Amber	37.0
Light Amber	36.0
Amber	35.0
Nontable	33.0

The weekly repayment level for 1990-crop honey is 38.0 cents per pound for all colors, table and nontable grades.

Levels are unchanged from those announced last week.

Producers who redeem their honey pledged as loan collateral by repaying their honey-price support loans at these levels may not repledge the same honey as collateral for another loan.

Jane K. Phillips (202) 447-7601 8:00 am-4:30 pm EST

John C. Ryan (202) 447-8207 4:30 pm-5:30 pm EST

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